

Assessment Policy for Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy School 26

The principles of “backward design” that are at the heart of the IB unit planning and teaching method (as described by Lynn Erickson et al.) provide a vital and living engagement with all subject area content. When we consider what it is that we would like our students to remember far into the future, what ideas will help to shape their lives and the lives of others in the most positive way, we must begin our teaching design with the subject area’s summative assessment. What is it that we want our students to know and understand?

Formative assessments are the steps or sign posts along the road that guide us to a fuller understanding of the topics and tasks at hand. Thus, formative assessments should be uniquely driven by student needs and the class as a whole. In a time in which “high stakes” and “standardized” assessment have come to dominate the instructional paradigm it is important that we recognize that assessment is an essential part of the relationship between teacher and student and acts as a guide, as much as a measure, of student achievement and effective instruction.

As a Public School, Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy is responsible for meeting the testing requirements of the Elizabeth School District, the State of New Jersey, and the Federal education mandates of the USA. These include District department created benchmarks, mid-terms, and final exams, State standardized tests (currently the NJ ASK to be replaced in 2015 by the PARCC examinations), and the reporting requirements of the Federal Governments “Race to the Top” initiative.

Purpose:

- Establish prior knowledge through the use of baseline assessments to inform instruction
- Strengthen the teaching and learning relationship through the communication of student strengths and needs.
- Guide instruction through the use of formative and summative assessments
- Meet District and State requirements while adhering to the instructional philosophy and methods of the IBO.

Principles:

- Instructional design is informed by the summative assessment.
- Process is equally important as product, and assessment will reflect this emphasis on reasoning skills.
- Assessment is developmentally appropriate and where necessary can be modified to meet the needs of individual students.
- Good assessment provides the means for reflection on learning by both teacher and student.
- Assessment provides parents with important information regarding their child’s developmental progress.

Practice:

- Assessment will meet the reporting requirements of the District and State while fully realizing the IB MYP philosophy and method of instructional design.
- There will be maintained an IB reporting system that utilizes the Criteria for Assessment and Subject area Objectives across the 3 years of the MYP offered at Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy while continuing to meet district grade reporting requirements.